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February 16, 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MCGOUGH BERRY
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Instructions for
Ambassador Thompson

Enclosed for your consideration
is an advance copy of the draft
instructions for Ambassador Thompson
for the next round of discussions
with Mr. Gromyko. This draft has
not yet been approved by the
Secretary.

L. D. Battle

Enclosure:
As noted

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Reviewed by: Elijah Kelly Jr.

Date: 4-4-91 19

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REVIEWED BY: W. H. Kelly Date: 6/6/91

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ACTION: Embassy MOSCOW

ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR

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1. Although your exchanges with Gromyko seem to be approaching stage of formalistic ritual dance, we believe that they should be allowed to follow their course and that you should accordingly request further meeting with him. Moreover, recent Soviet harassments in air corridors have added dangerous new element of which we must take account both in assessing Soviet intentions and in developing our own tactics.

2. We shall provide you in separate telegram with text of memorandum to be handed Gromyko to establish record for eventual possible publication should Soviets decide release various documents they have given you.

3. If prior to your next session arrangements have been completed for convening of Foreign Ministers in Geneva in connection eighteen-power-disarmament talks and you make no progress with Gromyko, you should towards end of conversation indicate that you will shortly be returning to Washington on consultation to assist in preparations for forthcoming discussions at Geneva. Secretary is looking forward to opportunity which presence in Geneva will provide to meet privately with Gromyko in effort to see whether some way towards mutually acceptable accommodation on Berlin cannot be found. Although present series of talks in Moscow have given little cause for optimism, perhaps break of some weeks during which both sides can reflect on arguments presented may be

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a good

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a good thing. In meantime it will be, of course, incumbent on both sides to avoid any unilateral acts which would only further exacerbate situation.

4. In view of air corridor harassments, you should begin by observing that Soviet attempts to restrict Allied air access in Berlin corridors and to alter established procedures has created a highly dangerous situation which cannot but affect our appraisal of Soviet intentions and good faith. You should refer in this connection to protests submitted by three powers to Soviet Foreign Ministry on February 15, making particular reference to passage stating that attempt to force changes in established procedures is incompatible with Soviet Foreign Minister's apparent agreement in talks with President Kennedy and Secretary Rusk that both sides should refrain from QUOTE actions which might aggravate international tensions UNQUOTE and with explicit commitment to this effect in joint statement of September 20, 1961 on principles for disarmament negotiations. To degree necessary you may draw on factual contents of note plus subsequent reporting telegrams from Berlin and LIVE OAK, but it would not be purpose of present meeting to engage in prolonged debate on situation in air corridors. Discussion this subject might be terminated by comment that highly volatile situation in air corridors underlines essential correctness of Western emphasis on access problem as requiring primary attention. This is area of activity where both

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both sides might most quickly find themselves in escalating situation involving grave risks.

5. Apart from foregoing and necessary refutation of certain points made by Gromyko during your last session, meeting should be directed primarily towards ascertaining whether Soviets leave any opening for progress in direction suggested by President to Adzhubai, i.e., that since final solution of Berlin problem seemed impossible, both sides should seek to find accommodation which would prevent tensions from mounting.

6. With reference to Gromyko's claim that US Government apparently does not have any intention of discussing seriously matters under question, you should observe that we are indeed very serious about these matters. QUOTE discussing seriously UNQUOTE in Soviet definition apparently means accepting their formulation of the problem and their proposal for a solution. For various reasons, including those stated in memorandum handed Soviet Foreign Minister during your third meeting, US proceeds from assumption that discussions between Great Powers must start with admission by both sides that neither one can expect other simply to accept either its formulation of problem or proposed solution. Serious discussion means finding some middle ground which is consistent with professed intentions and basic interests of both sides, and, if that is not possible, at least finding some modus vivendi which will

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avert grave risks of destructive war inherent in stalemate.

7. Exchanges so far between Soviet Foreign Minister and American Ambassador have created impression that no basis for accommodation exists. We find it difficult to believe that Soviet Government is so unaware of US position, or so unwilling to take it into account, that it can expect us to accept claims and proposals which American leaders have repeatedly stated are clearly unacceptable. Point has now apparently been reached where Soviets do not feel they can even follow up earlier indications that some procedural formula might be found within which possibility of an arrangement on Berlin could be further explored, and that this formula envisaged that basic arrangement must be between Soviet Union and Western Powers and not between latter and QUOTE GDR UNQUOTE. Instead we now have renewed Soviet emphasis on need for a GDR role in working out access arrangements which would leave entire situation at mercy of regime, leaders of which have made many statements about intentions which are completely incompatible with that freedom of access for West Berlin which Soviets have said they favored. Does all this mean that Soviets have given up idea of finding an accommodation on Berlin? We trust this is not case, and therefore once again suggest that most practicable way to begin would be to try to find some solution to access question. Soviet Foreign Minister has criticized US concentration on access. We have stressed this problem precisely

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Because it seems to us that possibility of conflict between USSR and US is likely to arise over misunderstanding regarding Access. Soviets have said they do not like idea of International Access Authority which we believe most useful approach to problem and practicable way of avoiding confrontation over it. We would, of course, be glad to discuss any variations in Access Authority proposal which Soviets have in mind. Incidents of kind we have had recently in air corridors would be avoided under International Access Authority proposal. We would appreciate having specific ideas from Soviets as to how they think confrontation over access might be avoided which go beyond generalities about QUOTE respect for GDR sovereignty UNQUOTE.

3. You might take up Gromyko's words as quoted in your 2100 regarding Soviet intention never to sign any document which would back occupation rights or favor retention of occupation regime in West Berlin, noting that this is not what we are proposing Soviets should do. As pointed out in our earlier memorandum, our rights in Berlin do not derive from Soviets and we are not asking that they sign their name to a document containing a term which seems to have acquired unpleasant associations for them. What we are asking is that they accept fact of Western presence in Berlin and draw appropriate conclusions from that fact without engaging in debate over differing

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differing legal views.

9. In this connection, you might observe, we have come to reluctant conclusion that Soviets have not addressed themselves directly to a number of important points made by American Ambassador or in US memorandum handed him at meeting before last. We hope that Soviet Foreign Minister will carefully reexamine this document.

10. You might conclude opening remarks by handing Gromyko memorandum which, you may point out, is intended to deal with a number of points made by Soviets in documents they have given us.

11. In unlikely event that Gromyko unveils any new element of flexibility in Soviet position, you should endeavor to draw him out to extent possible, and at appropriate point, indicate that you will report his statement back to your Government where it will be carefully considered.

12. During course of discussion you might, if appropriate, make some or all of following additional points in commenting on Soviet memorandum or Gromyko's arguments which, we assume, will follow their stereotyped course:

13. To all intents and purposes QUOTE peaceful coexistence UNQUOTE prevailed in Berlin for decade between Soviet imposed blockade and November 1958 when Soviets without any provocation again challenged Western position with threat of unilateral action. There is nothing explosive about West Berlin. Only threats to peace over

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the years have come from Soviet side moves against what they call QUOTE alien body UNQUOTE with implications of intentions to seek to suppress and absorb it.

14. Soviets are violating past commitments to single peace treaty and reunification while accusing us of preventing a partial peace treaty which would perpetuate the division of Germany. Soviet talk of peace treaty is not equivalent to wanting peace because claimed effects of peace treaty can only produce mounting tensions and threat to peace. Soviets should not forget that it is they - not we - who threaten to change existing situation and interfere with exercise of our rights. We are not aggressing against, or threatening, them in Berlin. It is they who are threatening us. If worse comes to worst, the world will easily understand that defending the exercise of one's rights and responsibilities is not aggression, but that what is being resisted is aggression.

15. As Khrushchev himself told President in Vienna, Western troops in Berlin are not important militarily, surrounded as they are by 20 Soviet divisions and 6 East German divisions, but are important as guarantee of our readiness to meet our obligations. Anyone seeking to remove this protection inevitably raises doubts as to his real intentions.

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